Remains of Malaysian killed in Kabul to come home on Friday

BY JASTIN AHMAD TARMIZI

KUALA LUMPUR: The remains of Malaysian economist and former civil servant who was killed in a suicide attack last Friday in a restaurant in Kabul, Afghanistan, is expected to be arrive here this Friday morning.

As of last night, the family was still waiting for confirmation from Adam Smith International, the employer of the late Dr Gnanathurai Nagarajah, 66.

His brother Premnath Nagarajah said the family was initially told that it would be on either Wednesday or Thursday.

"A representative from the company told us that the remains are expected to arrive on Friday morning but we are still waiting for the confirmation. We really want to know when."

"The waiting game is the worst part. We do not really know what is happening," he told *The Star* at the family residence in Taman Bukit Pantai here yesterday.

Premnath said family members were still in shock, adding that his mother, Nagaratnam, 88, was still unable to come to terms with Gnanathurai's death.
He said members of the family members who were living overseas, including Gnanathurai’s two sons, two daughters and his three-year-old granddaughter had not yet arrived for his funeral, expected to be at the Kampung Tunku crematorium on Saturday.

He said other family members and relatives had gathered at the family residence.

Premnath also confirmed that Wisma Putra had not contacted the family on the matter.

“None of our family members have heard from the Foreign Ministry. We are not sure why officials were reportedly looking for my brother’s next of kin. He was a former civil servant, they know where we live,” he added.

Gnanathurai was among 21 people who died after militants opened fire on diners at the Taverna du Liban restaurant at close range, according to a statement by Adam Smith International on Sunday.

Gnanathurai was working as the Budget Policy and Reform Adviser of the London-based body to help reform the national budget process for Afghanistan.

It was reported that a militant detonated his suicide vest at the fortified entrance of the restaurant after which two others stormed inside and opened fire.

Among the dead were two British citizens, two Canadians, a senior International Monetary Fund (IMF) representative from Lebanon and the restaurant’s Lebanese owner.

Wisma Putra in a statement said it received confirmation that a Malaysian was killed in the attack through the British High Commission in Kuala Lumpur, as the British Embassy in Kabul holds consular responsibility for unrepresented Commonwealth nationals in Afghanistan.